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Letter dated 24 June 2005 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the People's Republic of China in April 2005 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with other members of the Council. I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2005 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Introduction

Under the Presidency of the People's Republic of China in April 2005, the Security Council addressed a wide range of issues on its agenda, including Côte d'Ivoire, the Middle East, Bougainville, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Timor-Leste, MINURSO, ICTY, work of 1267 Committee, CTC and 1540 Committee, and the Security Council Mission to Haiti.

During the month of April, the Security Council held 14 official meetings and conducted informal consultations on 11 occasions. It adopted six resolutions and two presidential statements. The President also made five statements to the press on behalf of the Council.

On 4 April, the President briefed the press on the work programme of the Council for this month. The President also held meetings, respectively, with the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council, briefing them on the work of the Security Council.

Through its website (www.china-un.org), the presidency published in a regular and timely fashion the programme of work of the Council as well as activities carried out by the Council in April.

Africa

Côte d'Ivoire

On 4 April, the Council held a formal meeting and adopted unanimously resolution 1594 (2005), which extended the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) until 4 May 2005.

On 26 April, the Council held a public meeting on Côte d'Ivoire. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Foreign Minister of South Africa, briefed the Council on the latest developments in the Côte d'Ivoire peace process, especially on the meeting of Ivorian leaders in Pretoria, hosted by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa from 3 to 6 April 2005. The Council members expressed their welcome to the signature of the Pretoria agreement by the Ivorian parties on 6 April 2005, under the auspices of President Thabo Mbeki, and called on all parties to implement fully the agreement. They also commended President Mbeki for the essential role he has played and reaffirmed their full support for his mediation efforts mandated by the African Union.

Central African Republic

On 12 April, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Lamine Cissé, briefed the Security Council in informal consultations on the significant occurrences in the Central African Republic since January 2005. The Council members welcomed the progress made in the transitional process and the restoration of rule of law in the Central African Republic. In a press statement read by the

President of the Council after the consultations, members welcomed the first round of presidential and legislative elections in the Central African Republic and underlined the importance of the second round of elections scheduled for 1 May.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 7 April, the Security Council heard a briefing from Assistant Secretary-General Annabi on the statement issued by the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) in Rome on 31 March 2005, in which they condemned the 1994 genocide and committed themselves to renounce the use of force and cease all offensive operations against Rwanda. Mr. Annabi also briefed the Council on the latest development of disarmament and community reinsertion (DCR) programme in Ituri.

On 12 April, at a formal meeting of the Council, the President made a statement (S/PRST/2005/15) on behalf of the Council, in which the Council welcomed the encouraging statement made by FDLR on 31 March 2005, called on FDLR to turn its positive words into action and urged the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to work together, in close cooperation with MONUC, to make use of the chance given to them to contribute to peace and stability in the whole Great Lakes region of Africa.

On 18 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1596, by which the Secretary-General was requested to re-establish, for a period expiring on 31 July 2005, the Group of Experts referred to in paragraph 10 of resolution 1533 (2004), with the addition of a fifth expert for financial issues. Resolution 1596 also extended the scope of the arms embargo to any recipient in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with conditions for exemptions; described measures pertaining to aviation and customs control; and provided for travel restrictions and financial sanctions on all individuals and entities designated by the 1533 Committee as acting in violation of the armed embargo measures.

On 26 April, the Council heard a briefing from Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guehenno on recent political developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the transition is entering a key phase. The possibility for the Council to send a small mission to Kinshasa was discussed; a decision on this matter would be taken at a later stage when the Council deemed it appropriate. The President delivered a press statement after the meeting.

Western Sahara

On 26 April, during informal consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara Alvaro de Soto, presented briefly the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara and updated the recent activities carried out by the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). Mr. de Soto considered that despite the improved political climate in the region a lack of agreement remained and the stalemate in this long-standing conflict had left great humanitarian problems. He stated that MINURSO managed to complete an internal assessment of the state of compliance by the parties with the military agreement and established that there had been a serious deterioration in this regard. Concerning the possibility of reducing the size of the Mission, he indicated that given the situation on the ground MINURSO should be in the position to be able to provide adequate and effective monitoring of

the ceasefire, so he remained convinced that the downsizing of the military component of the Mission would not be advisable at this stage and the current military strength of the Mission needed to be maintained.

On 28 April, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1598, by which the mandate of MINURSO was extended for a period of six months until 31 October 2005, and concepts expressed during the informal consultations of 26 April were reiterated.

Asia

Iraq

On 11 April, the Council heard open briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, and the representative of the United States of America, Anne Patterson. Mr. Qazi introduced the Secretary-General's latest quarterly report, updated the Council on recent developments in the political process and the activities of the United Nations in Iraq. Ms. Patterson briefed the Council on the efforts and progress of the Multinational Force in fulfilling its mandate. The Permanent Representative of Iraq, Samir S. M. Sumaida'ie also delivered a statement. After the briefing, the Council held informal consultations. Afterwards, the President made a statement to the press, expressing the hope that there would be continued progress in Iraq's political transition, urging the Transitional National Assembly of Iraq to proceed on the constitutional process without delay, and stressing the need for this process to be as inclusive, participatory and transparent as possible.

Following informal consultations held on 11 April 2005, members of the Council discussed renaming the agenda item on issues pertaining to Iraq. Council members agreed that issues relating to the return of all Kuwaiti property, the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and remains, and the United Nations Compensation Commission would be considered under the agenda item entitled "The situation between Iraq and Kuwait". All other issues that did not fall into this category would be considered under the agenda item entitled "The situation concerning Iraq". Accordingly, the President issued a note on 18 April.

On 19 April, the Council was briefed at informal consultations by Yuli Vorontsov, the High-level Coordinator on the issue of the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country national or their remains. He presented the latest report on this matter and acknowledged that because of the difficult security situation the issue had not progressed substantially in recent months. Out of a total of 605 cases, the fate of some 280 was still unknown. Of the remains that had so far been returned, only 222 had been identified. He also praised the cooperation of the new Iraqi authority in returning remains and property. Following the consultations, the President issued a statement to the press, voicing confidence that the new Iraqi Government would help resolve the cases of hundreds of murdered Kuwaiti prisoners of war and third-country nationals and calling upon all parties concerned to continue to work towards a satisfactory solution to all of the outstanding humanitarian and property aspects covered by Mr. Vontontsov's mandate.

On 29 April, the President issued a statement to the press, welcoming the formation of the Transitional Government of Iraq envisaged in resolution 1546,

deploring the violence in Iraq and encouraging all the Iraqi political forces to continue the inclusive political process and dialogue in the best interests of the Iraqi people.

Middle East

On 21 April, the Council heard a monthly briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, stated that the revived peace process was still fragile and doubts and suspicions still needed to be dispelled about both Israeli intentions and Palestinian resolve and capabilities. Israel's planned disengagement from Gaza and the northern West Bank would be a landmark in Israeli-Palestinian relations, and he urged both sides to ensure that it happened in a coordinated way and that it would not become a dead end but contribute to the momentum for peace. Mr. Prendergast also touched on the situation in Lebanon. Afterwards, members of the Council held informal consultations and agreed in general with the assessment of the situation by the Under-Secretary-General.

Lebanon

On 7 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1595 (2005), establishing an international independent investigation Commission to investigate the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and calling on all States and parties to cooperate with the Commission fully.

On 29 April, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Terje Roed Larsen, briefed the Council on the first semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004). Mr. Larsen expressed his welcome to the letter from the Government of Syria to the Secretary-General formally notifying him that Syria had completed its withdrawal of all its troops from Lebanon. While stating that the parties concerned had made noticeable and significant progress towards implementing some of the provisions contained in resolution 1559 (2005), Mr. Larsen also said that regarding the implementation of other provisions of the resolution the parties had made no progress. He also noted that a full implementation of all requirements of the resolution would help enable the people of Lebanon and of the entire region to begin setting aside the past. Afterwards, members of the Council held informal consultations.

Bougainville

In the informal consultations held on 7 April, Council members discussed the Secretary-General's report on the Bougainville (Papua New Guinea) peace process and the Observer Mission in Bougainville (UNOMB). The Assistant Secretary-General, Danilo Turk, briefed the Council on new developments since the report was submitted. He reported that the preparation for elections of the first autonomous Government of Bougainville and been conducted satisfactorily, and with the achievement of the objectives within the peace agreement, the UNOMB mandate would have been fully implemented. The Council members welcomed the progress that had been achieved and looked forward to a successful completion of the peace process of Bougainville.

Timor-Leste

The Council held consultations on Timor-Leste on 26 April and heard a briefing on the ground situation by the Secretariat. On 28 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1599 (2005), establishing the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), a one-year follow-on special political mission that will remain in the country after the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) on 20 May 2005.

Europe

Georgia

On 21 April, during informal consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, briefed the Security Council on the meeting of the high-level representatives of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General on the question of Georgia, held in Geneva on 7 and 8 April, in reviewing the state of the Georgian-Abkhaz peace process.

Mr. Guehenno noted that the Group of Friends had welcomed the participation of the representatives of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides as an indication of their commitment to a peaceful settlement of the conflict and the interest of the parties in pursuing a practical approach to outstanding issues related to security and political matters, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and economic cooperation. The Group encouraged the parties to follow up with renewed discussions in the relevant task forces and working groups.

The Americas

Haiti

The fact-finding mission to Haiti, composed by all 15 members of the Council and led by Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg of Brazil, visited the country from 13 to 16 April to review progress achieved in such areas as security, development, the political transition, human rights, institution-building and the humanitarian situation. The mission was carried out in conjunction with the mission of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti of the Economic and Social Council. On 20 April, Mr. Sardenberg briefed the Council in a public meeting that the security situation in Haiti had gradually improved since late 2004, and that international assistance as well as national dialogue would continue to be vital for promoting social and political progress in the country.

Thematic issues

Counter-terrorism and non-proliferation

On 25 April, the Security Council held a public meeting at which it was briefed by the Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Council, namely the Al-Qaida/Taliban Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

The three Chairmen, César Mayoral, Ellen Margrethe Løj and Mihnea Ioan Motoc, spoke about the recent work carried out by the Committees and also commented on the progress made, the experience gained and the challenges remaining. The Chairmen also outlined the working plans and priorities of the Committees in the coming months. Members of the Council expressed their appreciation to the Chairmen for the joint briefing and agreed on the relevance of the Committees' respective mandates and the importance of coordination between the three Committees. They encouraged the Committees to increase cooperation among themselves and also with other United Nations bodies, including with the working group established pursuant to resolution 1566 (2004). Members also expressed their appreciation to Andrey Denisov for his excellent work during his chairmanship of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

At the end of the meeting, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/16), which, among other matters, endorsed the fifteenth 90-day working programme of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

International Tribunals

On 20 April, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1597 (2005), in which article 13 ter of the Statute of ICTY was amended to allow 27 ad litem judges elected in June 2001 to be eligible for re-election without any change in their entitlements or benefits, and the deadline for nomination of ad litem judges to ICTY was extended for a further 30 days from the date of its adoption upon the request of the Secretary-General in his letter of 11 April 2005.